



# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST



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## President's Corner

### BRNO 2005 EXHIBITION

BRNO 2005, a European Exhibition of Postage Stamps, was held 10-15 May at the Exhibition Grounds in Brno, Czech Republic. This show was the first in the Czech Republic to be under the patronage of the Federation of European Philatelic Associations (FEPA) with the support and recognition of the International Philatelic Federation (FIP). The show was organized by a committee of Brno philatelists, supported by the Czech Post and the Union of Czech Philatelists (SCF).

The stamp show utilized four buildings on the Exhibition Grounds, Halls "D" and "H", the Brno Pavilion and the Congress Center (Fig. 1).

Hall "D", a large, glass-walled building, was the center of BRNO 2005. It housed the competitive philatelic exhibits, booths for various postal administrations and stamp dealers, a youth postal center, and the facility to prepare personalized Czech postage stamp coupons. There was plenty of room to view the exhibits and the lighting was excellent, once some of the exhibits were protected from the direct sun (Fig. 2). The organizers also provided plenty of space in Hall "D" for people to sit, rest, chat, and have a drink or a bite to eat.

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## CZECHOSLOVAKIA 1918 TO 1948

by Richard W. Graham

Prague is one of the most beautiful cities in Europe. Mercifully untouched by the Second World War, today its old streets and squares are filled with tourists, mostly from western Europe and North America. Today the Czech Republic is thriving, a member of NATO, and very soon to join the European Union. The people we met there were very friendly towards Americans, and the young people are eager to practice their English.

It is hard for today's tourists to find traces of the old Czechoslovakia's tragic past. This country was brutally stripped of its freedom twice, once by fascism and once by communism. It endured six years of Nazi occupation and forty years of communist oppression enforced by Russian occupation.

Czechoslovakia was a product of western diplomacy. It had been a restless part of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire. With American and allied encouragement, it declared its independence in late October, 1918, near the end of the First World War. Its founder and first president, Tomas G. Masaryk, signed the papers at Independence Hall in Philadelphia. The United States officially supported Czech aspirations.



Fig. 1

The Treaty of Versailles confirmed Czechoslovakia as a new nation with a strange elongated shape. It was composed of three parts. Bohemia on the west, then Moravia, and to the east Slovakia, the poorest and least developed region. Among the first stamps were allegorical issues showing a woman representing the country and also the Bohemian lion, both

breaking the chains that held them in the absolute rule of the Hapsburg empire for over 350 years (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2

Dr. Tomas G. Masaryk, the president from 1918 to 1936, was an admirable and respected leader. He had a humble birth, since his father had been a servant to the Imperial Austrian monarchy. Despite this, he worked his way through university and became a distinguished professor of philosophy. He was married to an American. This remarkable man is featured on many Czechoslovak stamps (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3

Although usually considered part of eastern Europe, Czechoslovakia was always western oriented. Prague is actually west of Vienna, and about in line with Berlin and

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Dresden. Its government was truly democratic and remarkably stable during the twenty turbulent years between the world wars. It had considerable industry and a balanced economy. In short, despite its strange shape and the desire of Slovakia for autonomy, it was a viable nation. It looked to western Europe and America for example and encouragement. Britain and France guaranteed its independence as signers of the Treaty of Versailles. (The U.S. never signed this Treaty.)

In September, 1938, Britain and France met with Adolf Hitler in Munich. The two allies were frightened of Nazi Germany and wanted peace, literally at any price. They agreed, without consulting Czechoslovakia, to give Hitler the Sudetenland areas in Bohemia along the German border because ethnic Germans lived there.

These border regions were where all the elaborate Czech military fortifications were located. The Czech army was well equipped with modern weapons, highly motivated and ready to fight, but it was never given a chance to defend the nation against the Nazis. The western allies told the Czechoslovaks they would not

intervene if they resisted this aggression. The German Anschluss (annexation) of Austria earlier that same year had already surrounded Bohemia on three sides by Nazi territory.

Imagine then the sense of betrayal and despair in Czechoslovakia. The country was not only abandoned by its friends, but was literally dismembered and given away to a brutal regime. As Winston Churchill put it: *"Silent, mournful, abandoned, broken, Czechoslovakia recedes into the darkness."*

Hitler was not satisfied, of course. Just six months later he took the rest of the country, and set up the Nazi "Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia." The first stamps were overprints, others featured lovely scenes but also, of course, Hitler (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4

Bohemia and Moravia make a nice mini-collection just by itself. Slovakia became a separate independent puppet state with its own stamps, again an attractive small collection by itself (Fig. 5). This shameful appeasement gained Britain and France exactly one year of time. On September 1, 1939, the Second World War began with Hitler invading Poland.

The Nazi occupation of Bohemia and Moravia was especially harsh and cruel. The Nazis wanted to completely obliterate the Slavic Czech nation. Whole villages were murdered, every single man, woman and child. A notorious example is the village of Lidice, which is commemorated on a post-war stamp as a portrait simply entitled "Grief" (Fig. 6). A government in exile in London directed the resistance



Fig. 5

efforts. Small numbers of Czechs outside the country fought with all the various allies. They were honored with a stamp series right after the war (Fig. 7).



Fig. 7

In May 1945, the Czechs were liberated by the Russian Red Army. The people were naturally grateful, and the country sought friendship with the Soviets (Fig. 8). The country hoped to be a bridge between East and West. A major mistake! Poor Czechoslovakia's suffering was not over by any means. In February 1948, communists seized the government in a classic coup. Once communists were in control of the key cabinet ministries, any further democratic process was abolished, and the "Iron Curtain" came down.



Fig. 6

The Czech president, Eduard Benes, was threatened and intimidated. He resigned rather than sign a new communist constitution and died a short time later. The foreign minister was murdered and thrown out a window, and his death declared a suicide. No direct military intervention by the Russians was ever necessary.

Czechoslovakia was soon transformed into a miniature model of the Soviet Union, complete with constant repression by terror and the use of Soviet military force whenever needed. This was very quickly reflected in its stamps (Fig. 9). This 1948 take-over shocked the West and dispelled any last doubts about the sinister nature of the Soviet Union. It helped bring about NATO and the American Marshall plan. Czechoslovakia actually asked to join the Marshall Plan, but the Soviets forbid them to participate and forced them to retract their request.



Fig. 8

Only the collapse of communism in 1989 finally brought freedom back to the country. The Czechs and the Slovaks agreed to a friendly separation into separate republics on January 1, 1993, and Czechoslovakia was no more. Now we have the postage stamps of Czechoslovakia to document the tragic history of this long suffering country.

My own collection of Czech stamps stops at about 1948. Shortly after the communist takeover, the country began an exploitation of stamp collectors, using such practices as cancelled to order stamps and stamps produced for collectors and sold over face value. Besides, the communist issues sometimes portray blatant failed propaganda that I don't care to look at. However, I do believe that the stamps of communist Czechoslovakia were about the best designed and printed and among the most attractive of all the eastern bloc satellite countries.



Fig. 9

However, since I make my own albums, I can configure them any way I want



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to. I choose to collect only the first thirty years of Czechoslovakia's existence. I also have collections of both Bohemia-Moravia and Slovakia (1939-1945) in the same binder. Be creative! There is no wrong way to collect stamps, as long as you don't damage the material. Do what is fun and affordable for you!

For more comprehensive information on this interesting country that no longer exists, search on the internet to: "*Czechoslovakia, A Country Study*". This is a site sponsored by the Library of Congress.

You may enjoy reading "*Farewell to Prague*", by Miriam Darvas, for a compelling and tragic personal account of many of the events mentioned in this article.

*[Ed. Note: The SPECIALIST is pleased to reprint the preceding article from Global Stamp News, February 2004, with permission of the editor and the author, the associate editor of the publication.]*

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Starting From the Back

## PERSONAL DELIVERY STAMPS OCCUPIED UNUSUAL NICHE

by David L. Straight

Imagine expecting a letter so important that you want it delivered directly into your hand -- not simply left in your mailbox. You are able to inform your postal clerk not only to watch for this letter but that you will pay an additional fee when it is delivered into your hand.

Some postal services are so specialized that only one nation has ever issued stamps specifically to pay for that service.

Such is the case with the personal delivery stamps of Czechoslovakia and the two so-called protectorates -- Bohemia & Moravia and Slovakia -- into which it was divided by the Nazis after Germany had taken over the frontier land it wanted in the dark days preceding World War II.

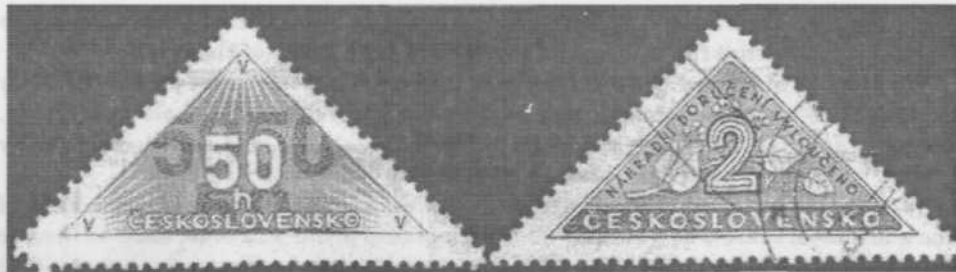


Figure 1: One of two 50-haler Czechoslovakian personal delivery stamps (left) first issued in 1937. (The perf irregularity at the lower-left corner suggests that this stamps may have come from the sheet margin.) Issued shortly after World War II, the last Czechoslovakian personal delivery stamp (right), a 2-koruna adhesive, saw little usage after it was released in 1946.

Figure 1 shows one of the first two personal delivery stamps of 1937 at left and a canceled Czech (no pun intended) personal delivery stamp of 1946 -- the last such issued -- on the right.

All these adhesives were triangular, unlike any other stamps produced by Czechoslovakia up to that time, to signal to post office personnel their unusual status and the special treatment that was due.

A total of but seven such stamps, issued in the short span between 1937 and 1946, have the personal delivery prefix "EX" in the back-of-the-book listings in the *Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue*.



Figure 2: A red 50-haler Bohemia & Moravia personal delivery stamp at bottom-left on this 1940 cover -- paid for, affixed and canceled in the addressee's town the day after it was mailed -- indicates that the addressee himself paid the charge to have the letter delivered personally into his hands.

The stamps at the top are tied by bilingual cancels used in the Nazi-controlled protectorate, giving German and Czech names ("Taus" and "Domazlice") for the same city. The personal delivery stamp is tied by an old-style canceler from Czechoslovakia.

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Figure 2 shows a May 3, 1940, cover, posted in Domazlice, Bohemia, near the German border, that fits the scenario described for the use of these issues.

The row of Linden Leaves definitive stamps across the upper part of the cover overpays the 1-koruna domestic rate by 5 haleru. Arriving at Praskolesy, Moravia, the next day, the 50-haleru red personal delivery stamp was added, paid for by Otakar Lukavsky, before the letter was placed in his hands.

For those senders who wanted to insure delivery exclusively into the hand of the addressee, there was a similar 50-haleru stamp printed in blue, such as the one from Bohemia & Moravia on the 1942 lettercard shown in Figure 3, that could be applied by the sender.



Figure 3: This 1.20-heller Bohemia & Moravia lettercard used in 1942 has a blue triangular personal delivery stamp at lower left, the color indicating that it was applied by the sender, who was paying to have it delivered personally to the address only (rather than, for example, in general mail to a household). Because this was supplied by the sender, it bears the same bilingual cancel as the lettercard's printed stamp -- a bilingual Hronow/Hronov datestamp.

Note also in Figure 3 that the sender has also marked the lettercard in German, "Zu eigenen Händen!!!" ("[In]to [his] own hands!!!") to reinforce the significance of that extra triangular stamp.

At the time that this 1942 lettercard was mailed, the domestic letter rate in Bohemia & Moravia had risen to 1.20 koruna.

In fact, these issues have sometimes been referred to as "lovers' stamps," the idea apparently being that they would be ideal on missives between two people carrying on an affair that was either frowned upon by the families or simply illicit.

(Truthfully, upon sober reflection, such a use for these stamps seems rather implausible, and was probably the concoction of a canny and creative stamp dealer.



After all, can you imagine anything better calculated to attract the interest of a jealous spouse than the arrival at the front door of a postman bearing a letter that he absolutely refuses to hand over, insisting that it can be given only to the husband or wife?)

The first two personal delivery stamps (Scott EX1-2), including the one at left in Figure 1, were issued by Czechoslovakia in 1937.

Both have a denomination of 50 haleru. Except for the colors -- red and blue -- and the tiny letters in each corner, the two stamps are identical.

The blue stamp with a "V" in each corner (for "vyplatni" [prepayment]) was for use by senders wishing to guarantee personal delivery. Its red counterpart with a "D" in each corner (for "doplatni" [postage due]) was for use by addressees wishing to receive the service.

Bohemia & Moravia used the same basic design, shown on the triangular stamps on the cover in Figure 2 and the lettercard in Figure 3, without the letters in the corners, and with the name of the protectorate displayed in both German ("Böhmen and Mähren") and in Czech ("Čechy a Morava"), along the shorter margins of the triangle rather than across the bottom of the design, for personal delivery stamps.

The Bohemia & Moravia personal delivery stamps are, in fact, bicolored: a 50-haleru carmine and rose triangle issued in 1939 and a 50-haleru indigo and blue adhesive released in 1940.

Slovakia also issued a pair of personal delivery stamps in 1940, with letters in the corners and the same color scheme but of a different design.

The last personal delivery stamp, shown on the right in Figure 1, was issued by postwar Czechoslovakia in 1946, with the inscription "Nahradni doruceni vyloučeno." The blue color of the stamp suggests that it was for use when sending a personal delivery letter (further suggesting that personal delivery service prepaid by recipients was no longer offered at this time). This postwar stamp was invalid after 1953 and is most often found canceled to order, as is the example shown. [Ed. Note: The author is correct that this last personal delivery stamp, 2 Kc, issued 1.7.1946, is difficult to find genuinely used. The three words found on it could be roughly translated as "personally delivering this to a substitute person is out of the question". Lubor Kunc has provided: "This stamp replaced the former Protectorate and Slovak personal delivery stamps. It was valid up through the Monetary Reform of 1953. After the reform the personal delivery fee was paid by standard stamps. This procedure is still in force. I am not sure about the past, but at the moment you can require personal delivery of a letter only if the letter has been sent by registered mail (the registered letters are delivered directly to the addressee's hand or the addressee can pick it up at the post office)."]

All seven of these remarkable stamps can easily be found in mint condition for a total of less than \$5.

However, coming up with each one of them used on a cover -- even a philatelically inspired cover -- will prove to be an interesting quest.

[Ed. Note: The SPECIALIST is pleased to reprint the preceding article from Stamp Collector, November 3, 2003, with permission.]

POSTAL HISTORY  
 THE CZECHOSLOVAK CURRENCY REFORM OF 1953

by Vladimír Dražan, Pavel Aksamit  
 trans. by Peter Z. Kleskovic

Part 4

Today we introduce Part 4 of one of the most interesting segments of philately in post war Czechoslovakia -- the 1953 currency reforms. In the previous three parts we have dealt with the basic facts of the reforms, validity of stamps and postal stationery, postal tariffs, paying postage on consignments in cash, meter machine imprints, consignments sent abroad, usage and validity of postage due stamps, usage of less common stamps, use of airmail stamps, single and multiple stamp franking, as well as combinations of stamps and meter machine imprints.



Figure 44: Picture postcard sent on 11.6.1953 with stepped franking using ten special stamps Pof. 708.

In today's installment we shall deal with interesting entires from the currency reform period in 1953, which are stepped franking, consignments with fixed or credited postal charges, parcel post dispatch form clippings, and less common types of consignments.

**Stepped franking**

This method of affixing stamps, where the stamps are affixed over each other and mutually cover one another, was not permitted by the postal regulations, because of the possibility of reuse of a significant number of the uncanceled

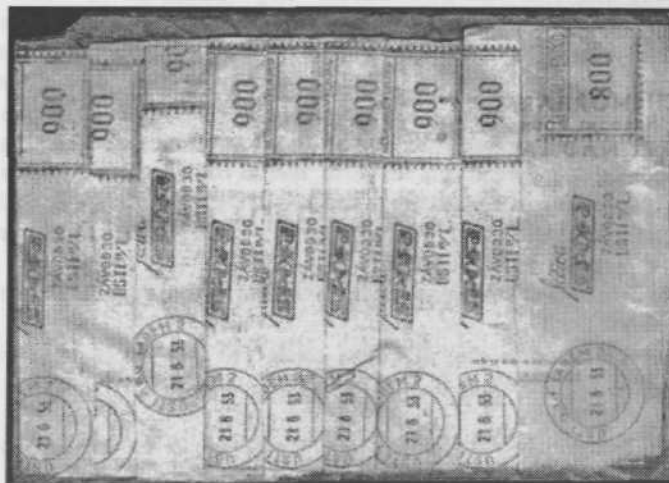


Figure 45: Reverse of R-letter sent 2.6.1953 with stepped business OVS affixed, postage 80 Kčs (8 x 9 Kčs + 1 x 8 Kčs).

stamps to the detriment of the post. In fact during the 1953 currency reform period consignments that were thus franked were tolerated in postal operations. These interesting and, by collectors, much sought after frankings occur most often on picture postcards (Fig. 44). The reason for this -- the utter lack of space to affix the large number of stamps required for postage on the consignment. For the same reason and in a similar manner, stamps were affixed to parcel dispatch forms. In comparison with letter mail, the occurrence of parcel dispatch forms with this type of franking is much, much smaller. Very infrequently did it occur that meter machine imprints on strips of paper were affixed in this way. One such unusual cover can be seen in Figure 45.



Figure 46: Business express/registered letter sent 12.6.1953 with bulk postage charge, which did not cover the express delivery surcharge. The surcharge for express delivery of 80 Kčs was settled with stamps.



Figure 47: Picture postal card Pof. CDV 90/7 sent 2.6.1953, franked with stamps valued 15 Kčs. The value of the imprinted stamp was not counted.

**Consignments with bulk or credited postal charges**

Many collectors specializing in the 1953 currency reform period especially devote particular attention to business correspondence, of which a large portion consists of letter consignments with bulk or credited postage. There exist a whole series of different varieties of handwritten notes, handstamps, etc., attesting to the fact as to why the consignments were not franked with stamps.

The most interesting of these are consignments surcharged with additional charges, e.g., for Express Delivery, which the bulk or credited postal charge did not

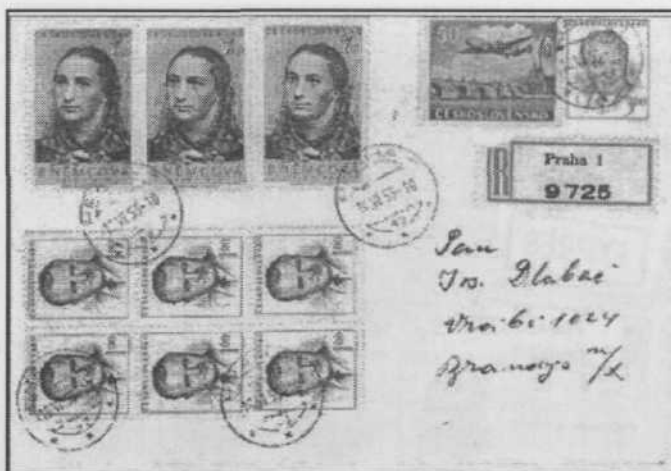


Figure 48: Imprinted stamp envelope Pof. COB 2 sent 18.6.1953 registered, surcharge 80 Kčs.

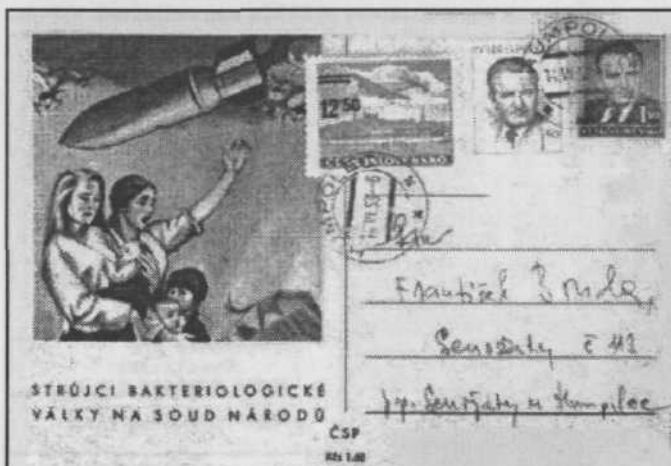


Figure 49: Picture postal card Pof. CDV 106 sent Sunday 14.6.1953, overfranked by 50h.

cover. Therefore, this part of the postage had to be reimbursed separately through either stamps (Fig. 46) or meter machine imprints.

#### Postal stationery

From the great quantity of postal stationery which was still valid during that time, the postal cards CDV 94, 96, 99 and 109 with the imprinted 1.50 Kčs Gottwald stamp occur most often. Other postal cards, picture postal cards (Fig. 47), envelopes with imprinted stamps (Fig. 48), and photo-postal stationery occur infrequently, while the usage of colored artistic picture postcards is quite rare. In view of the values of the imprinted stamps on the postal stationery, it was always necessary to use additional franking. This additional franking was usually done with

stamps, while meter machine imprints were relatively seldom used (see Part 3, Fig. 40 and 41). Infrequently there even occur payments of the missing postage or a part of it using cash. With postal cards, where it was necessary to pay the additional postage of 13.50 Kčs, sometimes over-franking was resorted to, usually by 50h (Fig.49).

Insufficiently franked postal stationery surcharged with postage due are very rare and were already described in chapter 7 [Mar/Apr 2005, p16].

#### Parce post dispatch form clippings

This type of philatelic material from other periods is fairly common and

usually sold by weight, but from the currency reform period it is philatelically very interesting and undervalued. With regard to the high amount of postage required, unusually high frankings can be found on dispatch forms, which it was not possible to add in any other way. Furthermore, due to the lack of space, stamps are relatively often found affixed to dispatch forms in various ways across themselves. Sometimes it is very difficult or in the end almost impossible -- without removing some of the stamps -- to determine the total value of the postal charges (see Fig. 50).

The very small number of occurrences of dispatch form clippings can be explained by the fact that with the relatively large number of stamps affixed to them (often they were even airmail stamps), they served as an inexpensive source of used stamps, especially higher valued stamps. And thus, many collectors of that time simply removed the stamps from the



Figure 51: Picture postcard sent 12.6.1953, carried by train post No. 507 Havlíčkův Brod - Brno.

Figure 50: Front and back of parcel dispatch form minus the left side receipt part, sent 5.6.1953, postage 430 Kčs.

forms, some of them in the end in the bathtub with the assistance of their entire family.



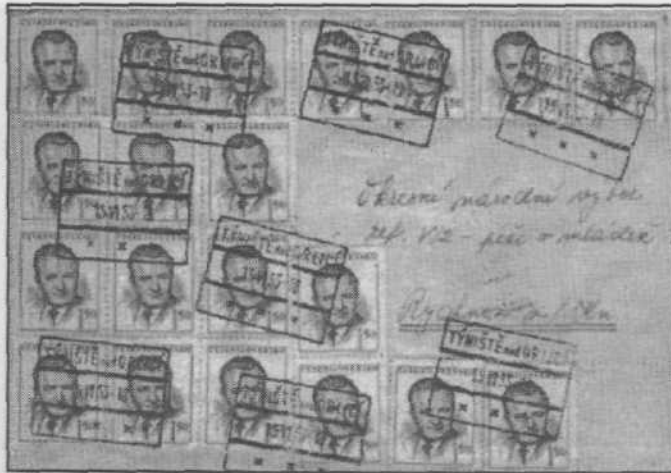


Figure 52: Letter posted 15.6.1953, with postmarks of the railway station postal box in Týništi and Orleci.

postmarks (Fig. 52) do not occur very often; with contract post office postmarks only rarely. The total number of contract post offices, which were actually in operation during this period, was not very high (even though officially there were about 250 of them in existence), with the majority of them just about to be officially closed. Likewise, it is possible to only occasionally find genuinely postally used entires with any kind of special postmarks (Fig. 53).

Consignments with postmarks from train post offices, railway station mail boxes, and contract post offices

Letter consignments with train post office postmarks (Fig. 51) and with railway station mail box



Figure 53: Letter posted 15.6.1953, with special postmark Kouřim/Visit the Excavations of the Zličkého Site.



Figure 55: Railway station letter sent 5.6.1953, postage 110 Kčs (note: a further 55 stamps Pof. 666 are on the back).



Figure 54: Money letter sent 2.6.1953, with declared value of 2,000 Kčs in the old currency, postage 105 Kčs.

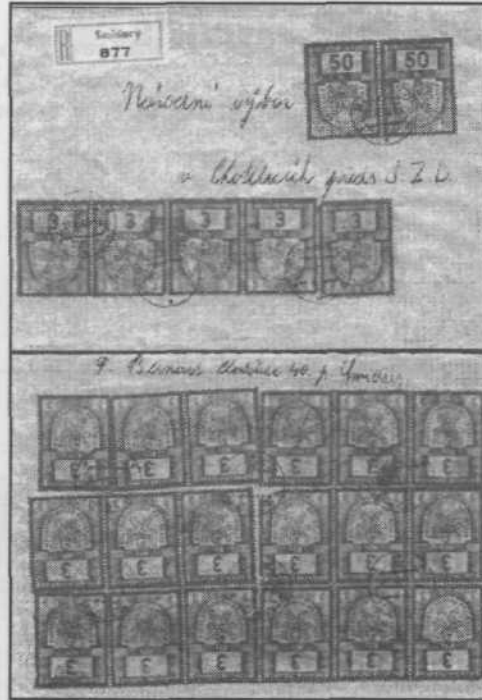


Figure 56: Local R-letter sent 12.6.1953, franked with revenue stamps on the front and back (2 x 50h + 23 x 3 Kčs), postage 70 Kčs.



Figure 57: Business journal "Vpřed" sent 6.6.1953 as printed matter to the Ministry of the Interior, postage 10 Kčs.

**Less common types of consignments**

Among the very interesting and collector sought after entires belong also all the less common types of consignments. Amongst them for example belong money letters which were accepted for delivery not only in official envelopes with printed form, but even also in ordinary office envelopes -- see Figure 54. Very sporadically

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occur railway station letters (Fig. 55). There exist even real curiosities, as for example an entire paid for with revenue stamps instead of postage stamps (Fig. 56). Consignments sent collect or personal delivery, as well as individually sent newspapers or magazines (Fig. 57) belong also among the rarest consignments of this period.

*(To be continued)*

✱ ✱ ✱ ✱ ✱

## *The President's Corner*

*(Continued from Page 1)*



Fig. 1

The Brno Pavilion housed the special exhibits, the non-competitive exhibits and the competitive literature exhibits. Among the special exhibits was a portion of the British Royal Stamp Collection, including the Penny Black and the Blue Mauritius. The Czech Postal Museum displayed an exhibit of the Austrian Mercury Newspaper stamps. Also on Display was a Japanese registered letter which survived the bombing of Hiroshima. The letter, owned by the German Philatelic Association, is radioactive.

Hall "H" was devoted to a stamp bourse. The Congress Center was used for administration. In addition Czech Post opened the Exhibition Ground post office, BRNO 26, located between Hall "D" and the Brno Pavilion.

The show's theme was the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Austerlitz, also known as the Battle of the Three Emperors. The battle occurred on 2 December 1805, between a French Army under the Emperor Napoleon and a joint Austrian and



Fig. 2

Russian Army under the command of the Russian General Kutuzov. The Austrian Emperor, Francis I and the Russian Emperor, Alexander I were present. The battle took place near the village of Slavkov u Brna, about 20 kilometers east of the city.

Czech Post honored the show with a number of postal cards, stamps and



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cancels. The special issues began more than a year before the show. At the time of the show, Czech Post issued a 30 Kč souvenir sheet and a postal card honoring the Battle of Austerlitz and BRNO 2005 (see the *New Issues of this issue*). Czech Post deployed a post bus to Svoboda Square in the middle of Brno (Fig. 3). The post bus, along with the BRNO 26 office at the Exhibition Grounds, and the main post office, BRNO 1, each used a different special cancel honoring the show. The BRNO 26 office also used a special cancel for the Day of the Czech Stamp, 12 May, the Congress of FEPA on 13 May, and the Day of Youth Philately, 15 May.



Fig. 4

As the United States Commissioner, I was privileged to attend many of the official functions of the show. The show's Grand Opening was held outdoors in front of the Brno Pavilion on a windy cool Monday afternoon. Local entertainment provided by local coral groups was interspersed with a seemingly endless stream of speeches. After more than an hour, the ribbon was cut and we were allowed inside for refreshments and to view the special exhibits.

While much of my time at Brno was taken up with official duties, the show's organizers scheduled some social events for the jury and commissioners. There was an evening dinner at the underground restaurant located behind the Augustinian Monastery where Gregor Mendel conducted his pioneering genetic studies using sweet peas. Fortunately, the evening's menu was much more than sweet peas!

One afternoon we were driven to a number of sites associated with the Battle



of Austerlitz. It was interesting to learn that Napoleon spent the night of 28 November in what is now called the Old Post Office (Fig. 4). Following the battle, the Austrian envoy met Napoleon in the same place to arrange an armistice.



Fig. 5

The Palmares was held at an unusual time, Saturday morning. Unfortunately, this conflicted with a stamp auction conducted by the Brno firm Klim.

Members of the Society won awards (Fig. 5) at the show:

- Hans van Dooremalen was awarded a Gold and the Grand Prix of the City of Brno for his exhibit the "Postal History of Brno up to 1875"
- Steve Washburne was awarded a Gold for his exhibit of "Portugal Classics"
- Jerry Verner was awarded a Large Vermeil for his exhibit "Czechoslovakia 1918-1938"
- Phil Rhoads was awarded a Vermeil for his exhibit "The Murder of Lidice"
- Olech Wyslowsky was awarded a Vermeil for his exhibit "Hradčany and Its Uses"
- Karel Fischer was awarded a Large Silver for his exhibit "Czechoslovakia 1945 -- The Košice Issue"
- Jerry Verner was awarded a Large Silver for his book "Mail of the Czechoslovak Legions in France"
- Anthony Dewey was awarded a Silver for his exhibit "The Hussite Issue of 1920"
- Henry Hahn was awarded a Silver Bronze for his book "Postal History of Telč and Vicinity"

Henry Hahn also had two exhibits in the Invited Class (non-competitive) -- "Pneumatic Mail of Vienna and Prague (1875-1918)" and "Pre-philatelic Mail from Future Czechoslovakia".

Saturday evening was the gala. Singers from the Brno Opera, dancers from the world-renowned Brno Ballet, and a folk group from the Slovácko region of

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southeastern Moravia provided the evening's entertainment. As usual in Brno, the food was excellent.

During BRNO 2005, the board of your Society held a meeting followed by lunch. We held the meeting and lunch in a private underground room in the restaurant "U Kolem". The atmosphere and food were excellent.

The principal item of business for the board was to decide on a means to offer English translations of Monografie volumes I - IV. These four volumes examine the postage stamps of the first republic from 1918 to 1938. Mark Wilson has almost completed the translations however, before they can be made available, we must satisfy Czech copyright laws. After talking to a number of people in the Czech Republic, the board resolved to begin the process by placing Czech-language versions of the volumes on the Society website. In time, the Czech versions will be replaced with the English translations.

Following the show, Henry Hahn led a group of philatelists on a visit to his hometown Telč. The town was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1992. The group enjoyed Henry's guided tour, a reception with the mayor and an evening with the local stamp club.

BRNO 2005 was an enjoyable experience for visitors and exhibitors alike. Despite a few minor glitches, it was one of the best-run stamp shows I have attended. In general the weather cooperated to make the trip to Brno very pleasant.

\* \* \* \* \*

## *Philatelic News and Views*

From Bob Hill:

- To mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the departure back to Košice of the Czechoslovak Government in Exile, a weekend of celebration was held based in Aston Abbots, just north of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, England, 29 April through 2 May 2005.

Over four days there were talks on the history of the area and walking tours of the surrounding villages with visits to buildings of notice, including the bus shelter (brick and glass) donated by President Beneš to the patient villagers and other buildings commandeered for the use of those exiled including the Abbey at Aston Abbots, the home of the Beneš'. In the evening there was a talk on the assassination of the notorious Heydrich.

Sunday saw a Church service attended by members of both the Czech and Slovak Embassies as well as the Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire (for those of you from the US, this is the Queen's representative in the county in full ceremonial dress, including stirrups!). There were representatives of the Czech and Slovak military as well as many old soldiers. This was followed by the planting of Lidice rose bushes and a Linden tree by the Ambassadors. The fly past at very low level by a Lancaster bomber was one of the highlights of the weekend, the noise of the engines was unmistakable, and the three passes of this superb aircraft was appreciated by all.

SCF member Richard Beith was one of three guest speakers and gave an

interesting paper illustrating how postally used covers and associated philatelic memorabilia could be used to show the flight of members (who were to make up the Forces in Exile) from leaving Czechoslovakia at the outset of hostilities until the return of the survivors in 1945.

From Linn's Stamp News, 9 May 2005:

-- The ARIPEX 2005 stamp show, sponsored by the Arizona Federation of Stamp Clubs, was held Jan. 21-23 in the Tucson Convention Center, Tucson, Arizona. Our members received the following awards:

- Anthony F. Dewey won the ARIPEX Grand Award for his exhibit "First U.N. Issue, 1951", which also earned a Gold and the American Philatelic Society 1940-80 medal.

- Phillip K. Rhoads won a Gold medal for his exhibit "The Murder of Lidice".

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## AMERICAN AND BRITISH FIELD POST OFFICES IN WESTERN BOHEMIA IN 1945

by Lubor Kunc

This year we celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WW II. The war created a complicated and dark side of Czech history, but it enables us to have very interesting postal history research. Remember, the territory of the current Czech Republic was a place where WW II in Europe finished . . .

Today I would like to draw your attention to the American and British field post offices which were situated in Western Bohemia, which was the most eastern place liberated by the soldiers of those countries.

On April 18, 1945 the first American troops crossed the Czechoslovak-German border near the Czech town of Cheb (Eger). In April 1945 the Soviet "Red" Army entered Czechoslovakia from Poland near Ostrava (Ostrau) -- other Soviet units liberated Slovakia at the same time. In addition to German, US and Soviet troops, smaller units of the Romanian and Belgian armies were present on Czechoslovak territory.

This "divided" liberation was caused by the US-Soviet agreement establishing a meeting line in Europe so that it divided Czechoslovakia into a larger zone to be liberated by the Soviet Union (the first Czechoslovak village being liberated on Oct. 6, 1944 was Kalinovo) and a smaller one belonging to the USA. The American zone consisted of Western Bohemia, with the main towns of the area being Plzeň (Pilsen), Rokycany (Rokycan), Aš (Asch), Cheb (Eger), Tachov (Tachau), Sušice (Schuttenhofen), Mariánské Lázně (Marienbad) and Vimperk (Winterberg).

Plzeň was a very important town, because it was one of the industrial centers producing a lot of guns for the German army (Fig. 1). This was also the reason why



Figure 1: Plzeň plants on the Czechoslovak stamp of 1938 which was overprinted in 1939 by the German authorities of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (Sc. B&M 7)

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Allied bombers completed 11 missions over Plzeň between 1942 and 1945. The results of the bombing were 926 deaths and 6,777 buildings demolished. On May 4, 1945 the German army surrendered under agreed conditions to the US Army. Immediately upon the news becoming public, the population of Plzeň started an uprising in the town and fought with the German troops that were still there. On May 6, 1945 Plzeň was liberated. Just for comparison, at that time, Berlin and Vienna were free.

This part of Bohemia was liberated by the troops of the 3<sup>rd</sup> US Army commanded by General Patton (Fig. 2). General Patton was subordinate to General Bradley (Fig. 3) -- commander of the 12<sup>th</sup> Army Group covering the area from Paris to Plzeň.

On May 5, 1945 an uprising started in Prague. The fighting in the city was more difficult than in Plzeň -- during your Prague walks you can see small monuments on buildings commemorating the Czechs that were killed during this event. General Patton was about 90 minutes away from the city, and he wanted to help Prague. He ordered the beginning of a large offensive in Bohemia to defeat the German troops moving on Prague. He also sent a reconnaissance unit to Prague (an OSS unit commanded by Captain E. Fodor) which soon reached it. The presence of the US soldiers in the city gave support to the people that were fighting the German army, because the people expected that the US Army was coming soon to help them. Unfortunately, Patton was forbidden



Figure 4: Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower

by personal order of D. Eisenhower (Fig. 4) to continue his expedition. He was ordered to stay on the line Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad) -- Plzeň (Pilsen) -- České Budějovice (Budweis), and thus not to break the line agreed to by Roosevelt and Stalin at the Yalta Conference. The Yalta agreement reserved the liberation of Prague to the Soviet Union, which had an important impact on the future political system of Czechoslovakia.

The above political decision to stop the American troops caused huge damage in Prague (Fig. 5) and the death of many people, because the German troops in Prague surrendered first on May 8, 1945, when the town was reached by the "Russian Liberating Army" of General Vlasov. The troops originally fought on Hitler's side against the Soviet Union, but towards the end of the war it joined the Allies and fought the Germans. After the war the Czechoslovak authorities extradited General Vlasov (upon Soviet demand) to the Soviet Union, where he was killed together with the majority of his soldiers. The first Soviet Red Army troops reached Prague on May 9, 1945. May 9 was celebrated by the Communists as the official date of Prague's



Figure 2+3: Gen. Patton and Gen. Bradley on US stamps of 1953 + 2000 (Sc. 1026, 3394)



Figure 5: Destroyed German armored vehicle before Old Town City Hall (damaged by the Nazis in May 1945)

liberation, and it was marked as the official end of WW II in Czechoslovakia. Despite this, the fighting with German troops continued in Central Bohemia until the middle of May 1945.

*(To be continued)*

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## THE ROAD TO PLZEŇ

by Karel Holoubek

trans. by Peter Kleskovic

*(Continue from previous issue)*

Because Cheb was in the area held by the Anglo-American Allied Forces, it was not possible to have direct contact with the remaining parts of Bohemia. That part was under Soviet administration, and the Soviets did not allow anyone to cross the line between the allied armies, not even the postal service. Later, Karel Janeba was named the manager of the post office in Cheb, and he published regulations regarding the cancellation and usage of postage stamps. The dispatch of the first postal shipments from Cheb were accomplished by their own couriers traveling through Plzeň to Prague. Later on, they would bring the mail only to Plzeň, and from there the regular Plzeň postal workers arranged for further delivery to the rest



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of the country. Naturally, all of the former prisoners longed to inform their families that they had survived prison. In addition, from Germany, former Czech forced laborers and refugees from concentration camps converged on Cheb, and at the local garrison the Americans formed an armed unit consisting of liberated Czech prisoners from Greussen. And thus, gradually, interest in postal services grew. This is why we encounter Cheb overprints on letters that transited the mail during that period.

The literature of the period says that the Postal Ministry received a detailed accounting of the overprinting with a breakdown of the number of overprinted and sold pieces, including unsold stamps. A part of this documentation, including complete sheets of stamps, is preserved in the Postal Museum. With respect to this overprint, it is obvious that approval had been gotten from the commander of the local Allied Forces garrison, since even though the initiative came from Czech prisoners, they would not have been able to do it without this support and approval.

By the end of April and beginning of May, it was clear that the war was coming to its end. Even when in some places German units offered strong resistance and acted very cruelly,

nevertheless, their route led to the territory occupied by the Western powers. At the beginnings of their forward movement the Allied units got fairly deep into the center of Bohemia. Then conforming to the orders of General Eisenhower, the advance of the units (headed for the original point of meeting near Karlovy Vary) was stopped. At that time they had already reached Sokolov. In this town there also appeared revolutionary overprints on German stamps, however these were done without the approval of the Allied armies. Their advance now turned away from the East, practically mirroring our historical border with Austria. Little by little other cities and places were liberated, and even here appeared overprints, but these were on Protectorate stamps.

Domazlice was the next town that the Allies entered on May 5, 1945, and on May 7, the local National Committee authorized the development of an overprint. This was also approved by Lieutenant Josef Fáhner, commander of the local Czech garrison, and also partisan commander. Based on this approval, the local postal



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

service handed over their entire supply of definitive stamps with the portrait of Hitler (10h through 20 K) and also both values of the St. Vitus stamps to the print shop of Karel Prunar. Overprinting from composed plates began immediately the next day on May 8 -- supervision of the overprinting was provided by Jiří Rojt. It was a three-rowed overprint in black. The overprint composition had to be adjusted to conform to the various formats of the definitive stamps. The overprinting of the 100-stamp sheets was carried out by Jidřich Kolerous. The overprint was attractive-looking, clean, and there are no known printing errors. Only the stamps of 10 K value were not overprinted in complete sheets, but were done in partial sheets. Already on May 9<sup>th</sup> the first overprinted stamps were delivered to the Domažlice post office. The town of Kdyně also joined in to the overprinting, since the local National Committee on May 6<sup>th</sup> had already given its approval, and in addition the post offices of Mrákav and Kouty collaborated. The overprinting process was ended on May 12, 1945, with the overprinting of the last missing 10 K values.

The stamps were normally sold at the Domažlice post office even though the local supervisor did not agree. Postally they were fully used and transported. Perhaps for this reason in the first half of May there came an inspection of the Domažlice post office by the Postal Ministry. This inspection, however, after viewing the written documentation, could not find any defects and sanctioned the overprinting. After the conclusion of the sale of the stamps at the post office, of the remaining stamps a part were purchased by local collectors and the rest were taken by the Postal Ministry. Although it is known how many stamps were overprinted, how many of the unsold stamps that were taken by the Ministry is not known.

In the early morning hours of May 6, 1945, the forward units of the US Second Army entered Plzeň. The city was liberated without any damage, and thus all of its institutions were functioning normally. Thus, even the postal service was operating. It stands to reason that in Plzeň, after its liberation, appeared overprints on the regular Protectorate stamps bearing the portrait of the leader of the occupying forces [Hitler]. These welcomed and declared our new freedom! Up until now, there have been twelve of these Plzeň locals identified in the world-renowned inventory by the Spaniard, A.S. Grau. It is fortunate that he was tolerated by the so-called "experts"



Fig. 6

under Communism; possibly, it would have been difficult for them to prohibit him [as a Spaniard] from his research. It developed as a result of many years of cooperative work with other collectors of this area. Thanks to the shortsightedness of our forefathers, the development of an inventory when all of the information was fresh and available was foiled. Today we cannot find many documents with evidence of their genuine "revolutionary" origins. Despite all this, we can proceed from

the work of some contemporaries. In the first place, these are the inventories of the overprints, which collectors traded amongst themselves.

I consider two overprints (which we find on correspondence) still having the two-languaged daily cancel from PLZEŇ 1, dated May 5, 1945, to be the oldest ones and to be authentic. These most probably involve letters that were removed from mailboxes. These overprints are in their form and design very similar, therefore, I think they originated from the same source. The overprint stamp was most likely

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Fig. 7

made from metal and the overprints are in black. Both of them announce "OSVOBOZENÉ" [liberated] in 1945, one for "ČECHY A MORAVA" [Bohemia and Moravia] and the other for "ČESKOSLOVENSKO". They are variations of the same image. On the top is a row of small squares with the purpose to cancel the existing header on the stamp, and under that is a small black lion with a Slovak emblem on its chest composed within a circular area. Beneath this, in an arc bordering the circular area, is that inscription SVOBODNÉ [sic OSVOBOZENÉ]. And then further below this in horizontal lines are either the ČECHY A MORAVA or ČESKOSLOVENSKO. Finally, below this is the year 1945. I would explain this two version text as follows. In these initial hours of our liberation it was not known how the constitutional arrangement would turn out -- would we continue to be divided into two states, or would we again be one?

According to a newspaper clipping from *Plzeňská Pravda* of July 24, 1969, the author of this overprint stamp was an unknown employee from the local Skoda factory. The article states that he cut the lions from the old Czechoslovak 20h coins, and that he had already started this work in 1943. The article also gives the number of overprinted stamps of each variety.

A second overprint is a two-lined rubber stamp "Československá Republika". The imprint is either violet or black. These words are placed symmetrically about a central axis. It can also be found on envelopes, where only a part of it is on the stamp and the rest is on the envelope. The daily cancel from the PLZEŇ 1 post office that is on these items has had the German text extracted, and that is also true of those from May 5, 1945. The latest date with this overprint that I know of that appears on envelopes is May 21, 1945. The cancels have various distinguishing letters. The existence of this overprint stamp was confirmed by a note of the supervisor of the Plzeň 1 post office, dated June 14, 1945: ". . . The rubber stamp "Osvobozené Československo" we have taken out of service and its use is strictly prohibited." This declaration was written on the second page of a request addressed to this post office by a known collector of this specialty



Fig. 8

K.F. Pešák. The presentation stamp of this office has a date of the 13<sup>th</sup> and has an inserted reference number. I believe that despite the fact that in the note is presented a different sort of overprint wording than we know from overprint images, it does not take away from its expressive value.

Even though we only know of the existence of these three overprint stamps on mail collected from mail boxes, there exist also entire sets of mint Protectorate postage stamps that were overprinted with them.

Another overprint stamp has the text "Osvobozené" -- below it is again the "circular" lion with the text "Československo" / "1945", with all text horizontal. The whole overprint is of a finer quality, the text is smaller, the small lion is executed in outline, and it is difficult to tell whether the lion has the Slovak emblem on its chest. The year text is obviously made from a larger type. This overprint does not occur as often as the previous ones, and also it is not known to have gone through the mails.



Fig. 9

Another overprint, or group of overprints, that I would like to mention is a framed rubber stamp reporting, or noting, that "USA / osvobodila / Plzeň / 6.5.1945" [USA liberated Plzeň]. Above this four-line text there is, separated by a line, the three letters "ČSR". The overprint is either violet or black and occurs in several different sizes. Even if I would like to include it with the authentic overprints, its frequent use outside of Plzeň gives it a certain negative element. On the other hand I have to say that this is nothing that extraordinary, since I know of such uses with other overprints. The existence of this overprint is connected with the existence of lithographic postcards with pictures from the lives of the American soldiers in Plzeň. However, regarding these, I will talk about them later.



Fig. 10

As I have previously pointed out, A.S. Grau -- in the last edition of his 1998 handbook describing our revolutionary overprints -- listed 12 different ones from Plzeň. This accounting has gone through several revisions since its previous publication in 1978. Of them, in a letter addressed to A. Černovický dated 30.9.1945 on the stationery of the PRVNÍ KLUB FILATELISTU V PLZNI [the first philatelic club of Plzeň], two officials of the club stated: "Here in Plzeň there were issued only 5 overprints (varieties)". Of course, it is up to each person as to what he includes in his collection. Only for the sake of completeness of reader's knowledge, I am listing these additional overprints.

During the first days of May 1945, the American army also liberated additional towns of this region. We are reminded of Strakonice, Písek, and others. And now comes the time to talk about the postcards, as I mentioned earlier that I would. The most interesting ones are those from Plzeň, and they are also the most frequently found. But as introduction, I would like to mention one from Strakonice.

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It is a drawing by Jarka Dvořák Šumavský. His name is written on the address side of this postcard, just like the signature in the right, lower corner of the drawing.

First, the description. On the address side at the bottom in small letters is given the name of the producer -- "Planografia" Plzeň - Československo. Therefore, we know the name of the producer of the card. Now the name of the author of the drawings! There are two of them and according to that information and yet other indications, I am dividing these postcards into three sets. The first of them is Bill Powell. On one of the cards he is labeled as "SGT", i.e., sergeant, a member of the US Army. His drawings are signed and some of them also show "Plzeň, May 22, 45". The date is given in the sequence that Americans are used to. On others, there is a signature J. Lauda, and I do not know anything more about him. The postcards are printed on two different kinds of pasteboard. One of them is slightly yellowish, while the second one is tinged toward pink. So this is another identifying mark. Another one is the color of the print. One is deep black, the other is brownish.

As the first one I would describe the set with the drawings created by B. Powell, having yellowish pasteboard and the print black.

The second set also has the print in black and is on yellowish pasteboard, but the author of the drawings is J. Lauda.

The third one has the print in brown on pasteboard of the different color, and the author is again J. Lauda, and the postcards are slightly larger than the previous ones.

Appropriately next should come a list of all of the postcards that I know about. Here we are talking about 40 series. Based on my experiences there can still exist others, but I have not encountered them. But for now it could be enough to copy both sides of postcards entitled "Yank soldier's song", the postcard "Jesep" on which is applied a stamp with an overprint canceled with an as yet unidentified blind cancel with a date of 9. V. 45 and author of A. Loudy, and a postcard signed by Powell with the marking Pilsen, May 22, 45.

Despite the fact that this next overprint does not expressly pertain to this region nor to the advance of the US Army, I have to complete this report regarding the overprints by describing the trip of the US Army mission to the headquarters of the German Field Marshal Schoerner at the Spa of Velichovek. Schoerner, however, was no longer there, having already flown away in his plane, and so this mission was not successful.

The overprint is on the larger format Protectorate stamps with Smetana and St. Vitus. It is black and consists of four lines of text: "Předvoj + USA + ve Velichovkách + 8.5.1945". This mission consisting of several jeeps and a panzer-wagon of the infantry departed from Plzeň to Prague and then to Hradec Králové and through Jaroměř into the Spa of Velichovek.



Fig. 11



The Spa of Velichovek, even today, is a small town without any capabilities to create this overprint. The people from Jaroměř were well aware of the mission and there the overprint originated -- and they have admitted as much.

Even though admittedly philately is not recognized as a supporting historical science, as for example numismatics is, we have to admit that it is telling us something about the advances in the liberation of our Republic, and especially, about the attitude of its population in the liberated cities. They wanted to have in their hands something that would document that the Republic as well as they were free again.

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### *Letters to the Editor*

1. Dear Lou:

I'd like to voice my sincere thanks on behalf of all of us who attended the Brno show, to our BRNO'05 Commissioner, and President of our Society, Tom Cossaboom, for the stupendous job he performed on our behalf. Serving as Commissioner is a job far more difficult than exhibiting or judging, and far more depends on the Commissioner's performance than many of us realize. Attending to the needs of every exhibitor, lugging the exhibits, hassling with the show management, attending many working meetings at the show, and finally bringing back and returning our exhibits is a tough and insufficiently recognized job. Thanks Tom for smiling through it all!!!

Henry Hahn

\* \* \* \* \*

### **ELECTION RESULTS**

In our recent election you re-elected incumbent board members Tom Cossaboom, Henry Hahn, Savoy Horvath, Peter Kleskovic, and Ludvik Svoboda. Their terms of office begin immediately and run through 2011.

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### *New Issues*

#### **CZECH REPUBLIC**

by G.M. van Zanten

1. On April 13, 2005, the Ministry of Communications issued a set of three commemorative stamps in the Personalities series (Fig. 1). The stamps were designed by Oldřich Kulhánek, engraved by Miloš Ondráček, and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague using rotary recess print in green combined with color photogravure in printing sheets of 50 pieces.

-- 7.50 Kč: Bohuslav Brauner (1855-1935) -- in dark brown (recess print), rose, blue-green, and violet. A major Czech inorganic chemist B. Brauner, professor at the



Fig. 1

Faculty of Science of Charles University, mainly studied rare earth metals, determination of their atomic weights and their classification in the periodic system of elements. He was a friend of D.I. Mendelejev. In the 1880's he anticipated the existence of isotopes and used

oxygen as the basis of relative atomic weights of elements, which later became an internationally accepted design. Professor Brauner was the author or a co-author of approximately 170 publications. The postage stamp featuring a portrait of this follower and promoter of the periodic law and periodic system of elements is issued on the occasion of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth. A FDC in red-brown shows a detail from the periodic system of elements (Fig. 2).

-- 12 Kč: Adalbert Stifter (1805-1868) -- in dark-violet (recess print), light violet, red, and blue. Adalbert Stifter, writer and painter, was born in the little medieval town of Horní Planá, which is situated in the Šumava Region on the present day shores above the left bank of the dam created in the Vltava river for the Lipno reservoir. The lake behind this dam is some 44 km long and also a summer resort some 780m above sea level; on a rock overlooking the lake stands a memorial to him. The house in which he was born bears a memorial tablet and a small museum. Nonetheless, he spent most of his life in Austria. A pedagogue and school inspector



Fig. 2

by profession, he was also a gifted painter of landscapes and portraits, with an interest also in preservation of cultural, art and architectural heritage. His works as a writer were influenced with the classical humanistic ideals. He emphasized a harmony between man and nature, mental stability, devotion and moral integrity. He described in detail things and natural scenes and his typified, often idealized characters correspond with the Biedermeier view of the world. One of his best known stories is "Crystal". The large educational novel "Late Summer" and the Czech historical novel "Vítek" were appreciated no earlier than in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His life as well as works were a personification of the ideal of a Czech-German symbiosis. The postage stamp is issued on the occasion of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth. A FDC in blue-violet shows a tree symbolizing the poet's beloved native Šumava (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3

-- 19 Kč: Mikuláš Dačický of Heslov (1555-1626) -- in green-black (recess print), grey, violet and dark blue. The Czech poet and chronicler M. Dačický was educated in Latin and in literary

art, he also studied law and economy. Despite this he felt no need of pursuing a particular profession. His share in his father's inheritance enabled him to live a careless life of a barrelhouse loafer, licentious man and a bully. Only as an old, steady man did he begin his work as a chronicler of the town of Kutná Hora by editing the records of his predecessors and further continuing them from 1575 until his death. In his "Memories" he describes the ordinary life of Kutná Hora, at that time the merchant center of Bohemia. Most valuable is his evidence of the history of mining, digging and minting. He notices corrupt officials, mentions the sentences of medieval law, describes marriage as well as burial ceremonies, refers to the plague and gives an unbiased picture of the events surrounding the Battle of White Mountain which he personally witnessed. He collected his satirical and other poems into the writing "Prostopravdy". The postage stamp featuring his portrait is issued on the occasion of the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of birth of this remarkable adventurer. A FDC in blue-green shows items symbolizing his life (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4

2. On May 4, 2005, the Ministry issued a commemorative stamp and a commemorative souvenir sheet with a stamp designed to promote the European Exhibition of Postage Stamps BRNO 2005 which is to be held at the Brno Exhibition Center on May 10-15, 2005, i.e., in the year of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Austerlitz. This battle-of-three-emperors tends to be the name of the largest military conflict which took place on Czech territory. On 2 December 1805 the allied armies of the Russian emperor Alexander I and the Austrian emperor Franz I met the army of the French emperor Napoleon I on the hills and in the valleys between Brno and Austerlitz [Slavkov]. The fight engaged 90,000 allied and 70,000 French troops. Napoleon followed the first hours of the fighting from a tiny elevation called Žuráň. From this point he gave his command at 8:30 a.m. of attacking Pratecký hill. His wonderful strategy successfully divided the armies of the enemy and put them to flight. In 1910-12, on the motion of the Brno priest Prof. A. Slovák and on the design by the architect J. Fanta (1856-1954), the Peace Monument, an Art Nouveau stone monument of the victims of the battle, was erected on Pratecký hill where the decisive and heaviest fighting took place. The relics of those killed found on the battlefield are deposited in its ossarium. A partial financial contribution to the building came also from Russia, France and Austria-Hungary. The former battlefield is the place of annual celebrations of Napoleon's triumph, laying of wreaths by the Peace Monument and other accompanying events. The celebrations culminate with a reconstruction of the Battle of Austerlitz beneath Santon hill. Žuráň is an extraterritorial area of France in the Czech Republic.

-- 19 Kč: features the Peace Monument and the portrait of Emperor Napoleon I and the text Slavkov 1805 - 2005 (Fig. 5). This is a joint issue with France. The French version contains the text Austerlitz 1805 - 2005 and the denomination of 0.55€. The designer of both versions was



Fig. 5

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Fig. 6

Czech graphic artist Karel Zeman. The Czech version was engraved by Jaroslav Tvrdoň, while the French one was engraved by Claude Jumelet. The Czech stamp was produced by the Post Printing House in Prague using rotary recess print in black combined with photogravure in ochre, blue, rose and red. It is printed in a block of 40 stamps accompanied by 2 half-sized labels placed alternatively in a column in the right and left margins of the sheet. The first label features Napoleon on the balcony of the Viceregency Palace (today The Moravian Gallery of Brno), while the other one bears a drawing of a sabre bag, a sabre, and a gun. A FDC in blue shows the banners of all three of the fighting parties (Fig. 6).

-- 30 Kč: is the central portion of a souvenir sheet that shows the oil painting by L.F. Lejeune from 1808 displaying the atmosphere on the eve of the battle when Napoleon and his



Fig. 7

generals are interrogating Moravian farmers (Fig. 7). The painting is displayed at the chateau in Versailles. Below the stamp is the Czech text stating "Napoleon on the Eve of the Battle of Slavkov / Louis-Francois Lejeune (1775-1848)". The souvenir sheet with stamp was designed by Zdeněk Ziegler, engraved by Václav Fajt (only the stamp portion is engraved), and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by recess print from flat plates in black combined with multicolored offset. A FDC has

a cachet showing a study for the "Year 1805" by the French painter Jean Luis Meissonier (1815-1891), line-drawing (Fig. 8).



Fig. 8

3. On May 4, 2005, the Ministry issued a 9 Kč commemorative stamp in the EUROPA series entitled "Gastronomy" (Fig. 9). The stamp features one of the typical Czech menu items --



Fig. 9

roasted duck with dumplings and cabbage accompanied by a pint of beer. The stamp was designed by Jiří Sliva, engraved by Pavel Kovářík, and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by multicolored offset in printing sheets of 6 pieces. In the middle of the bottom of the printing sheet is located a hologram to serve as a protective component. A FDC in black bears a cachet showing a cartoon with gastronomic theme (a waiter with a pigs head appears to be carrying a serving tray)(Fig. 10).



Fig. 10

4. On May 25, 2005, the Ministry issued a 12 Kč commemorative stamp entitled "The 2005 World Year of Physics" (Fig. 11). The



Fig. 11

postage stamp features the logotype of the 2005 World Year of Physics (light cone) and Einstein's principle of the constant velocity of light. The mentioned elements are a part of relativistic physics and are

mutual complements. The World Year of Physics was announced on a motion made by the European Physical Society and the International Union for Pure and Applied Physics. The year of 2005 was



Fig. 12

chosen with respect to the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of publication of the basic works by Albert Einstein in relativistic and quantum physics. This physicist of world renown was a lecturer in the years of 1911-12 at the University of Prague. The purpose of the World Year of Physics is to commemorate the great achievements in physics of the past century and to refer to problems which it can help to solve, e.g. sufficient energy resources, new materials, transport, communication, information technologies, the environment as well as human health. The stamp was designed by Zdeněk Ziegler, engraved by Václav Fajt, and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague using rotary recess print in black combined with photogravure in ocher, green, blue and red in printing sheets of 50



## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

and red in printing sheets of 50 pieces. A FDC in brown has a cachet showing a portrait of Albert Einstein created by M. Svabinsky in 1955 (Fig. 12). Under the portrait is the following text in Czech:

ALBERT EINSTEIN 1905  
THEORY OF BROWNIAN MOTION  
THEORY OF THE PHOTOELECTRIC PHENOMENON  
SPECIAL THEORY OF RELATIVITY

5. On May 25, 2005, the Ministry issued a 7.50 Kč commemorative stamp in the For Children series (Fig. 13). In the 1970's Václav Čtvrtek wrote his stories for children "Stories from the Tree Stump Cottage of Křemílek and Vochomůrka". The stamp



Fig. 13

depicts Křemílek and Vochomůrka frolicking and joined by a long colored scarf. The designer, screenwriter and director of animated films Z. Smetana arranged the stories of the forest elves, voiced in her distinctive way by the actress J. Bohdalová, for the popular children bedtime television program "Večerníček". Z. Smetana also created other nice characters for children audiences, e.g. The Little Witch, Kubula and Kuba Kubikula, and The Little Reed Man which became the topic of a postage stamp several years ago. The stamp was designed by Zdeněk Smetana, engraved by Jiří Bouda, and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print in black combined with photogravure in yellowgreen, yellow, and red in printing sheets of 30 pieces, and also in philatelic booklets of 8 stamps and 2 labels. The label (same size and colors) shows a little butterfly girl. A FDC in black has a cachet showing a drawing of the little stump cottage of Křemílek and Vochomůrka (Fig. 14).

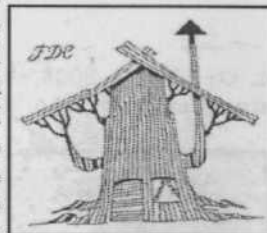


Fig. 14

## Stationery

6. On May 4, 2005, the Ministry issued a commemorative postal card with an imprinted 7.50 Kč postage stamp to promote the European Postage Stamp Exhibition BRNO 2005 (Fig. 15). The image of the imprinted stamp shows a graphical composition of the Brno coat-of-arms, the Brno dragon, and a wooden wheel -- it is similar to the one from the postal card issued for the exhibition on November 5, 2003. The illustration on the left portion of the postal card shows Santon hill which is located near the village of Tvarozná ca. 10 km from Brno. It got this name in 1805 from the soldiers of Napoleon who used it as a strategic point. Before the battle, the French soldiers pulled down the chapel on the top of the hill, which was built up again in 1832. Near it is placed a replica of a French cannon from the time of the battle of Slavkov. The text translates as the "200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Slavkov, 1805, 2005, Top of Santon". The card was designed by Karel Dvořák and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by colored offset. It sells for 12.50 Kč.

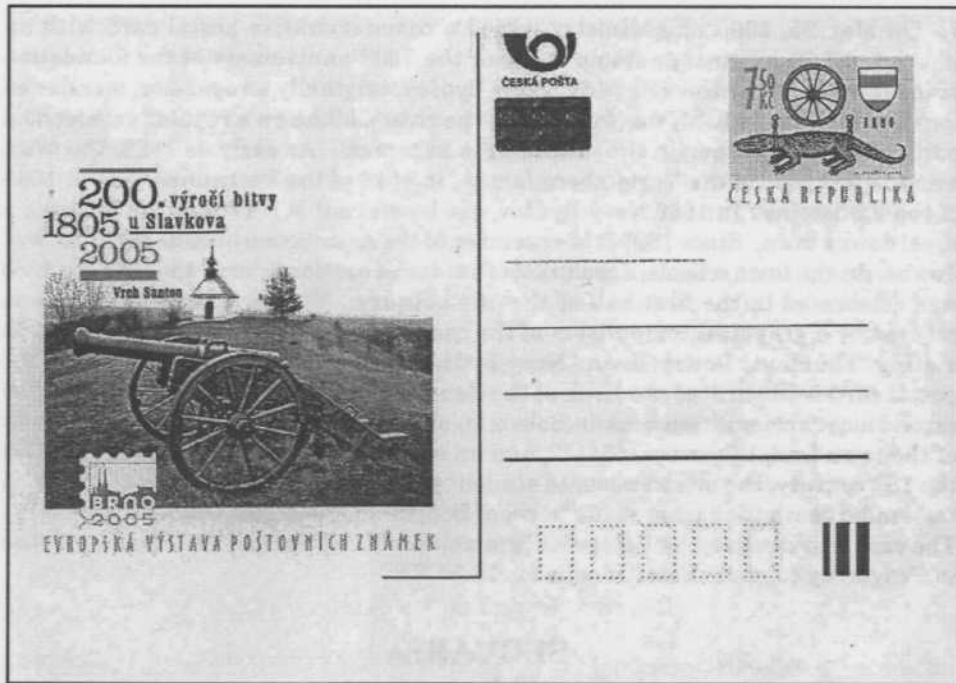


Fig. 15

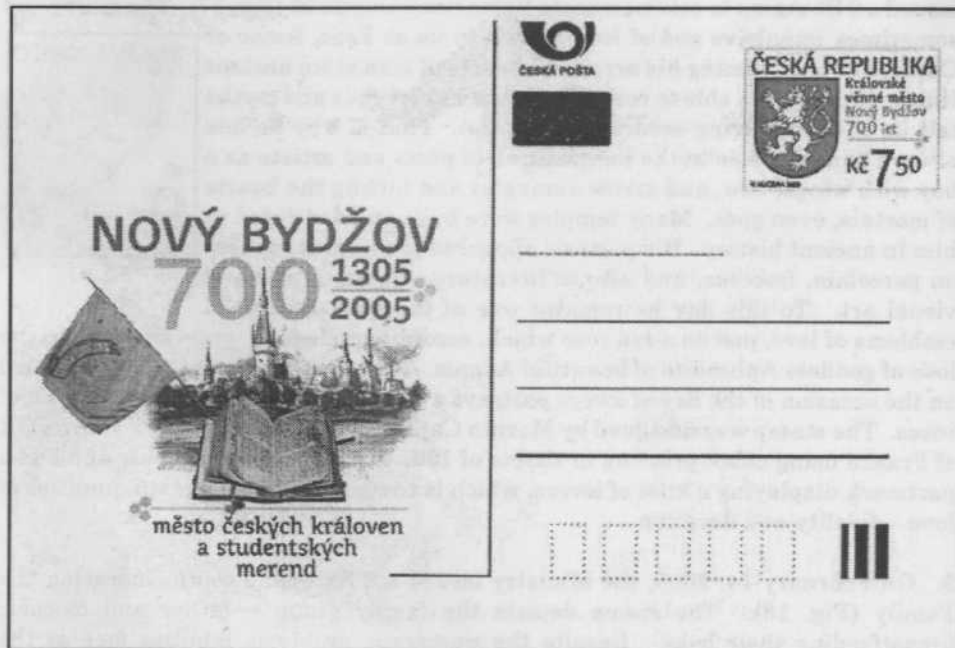


Fig. 16

#### THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

7. On May 25, 2005, the Ministry issued a commemorative postal card with an imprinted 7.50 Kč postage stamp to honor the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the town Nový Bydžov (Fig. 16). Nový Bydžov, originally a royal city, mentioned for the first time in 1305, was founded on the river Cidlina on a regular geometrical outline which is unique in the middle ages urbanism. As early as 1325, the town was the property of the Vartemberg family, in 1516 of the Pernstejns, and in 1548 of the Valdstejns. In 1569 Nový Bydžov was bought out of servitude and became a royal dowry town. Since 1999 it is a member of the Association of Nine Royal Dowry Towns. In the town schools, a tradition of student's parties is kept, the first of which was celebrated in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The picture of the stamp is created by a graphical composition of the coat-of-arms of the town and Czech text stating "The Royal Dowry Town / Nový Bydžov / 700 Years". In the left part of the postal card is illustrated the Book of the Conscience from the years 1311-1470 (the second most ancient town book in Bohemia) against a background of the oldest view of the town from the years 1536-37, and an old student's flag from the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the most treasured student party relic in Nový Bydžov. The Czech text underneath the cachet reads "town of Bohemian queens and student's parties". The card was designed by Václav Kučera and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by colored offset. It sells for 12.50 Kč.

### SLOVAKIA

by Gerald M. van Zanten

8. On January 31, 2005, the Ministry of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications issued a 9 Sk stamp to commemorate Valentine's Day 2005 (Fig. 17). The merry and sometimes impulsive god of love known to us as Eros, Amor or Cupid, has been aiming his arrows at hearts of men since ancient times. Nobody was able to resist him. Ancient legends and myths tell us of the unerring accuracy of his aim. That is why he has always had his place in the imagination of poets and artists as a boy with wings, bow, and arrow aiming at and hitting the hearts of mortals, even gods. Many temples were built and dedicated to him in ancient history. His portrait appeared in pictures painted on porcelain, frescoes, and also in literature, drama, music and visual art. To this day he remains one of the most renowned emblems of love, just as a red rose which, according to legend, grew as a sign of the love of goddess Aphrodite of beautiful Adonis. Therefore, the postal stamps issued on the occasion of the day of lovers portrays a winged god floating above a bunch of roses. The stamp was designed by Marián Čapka and produced by WSP - CARTOR of France using offset printing in sheets of 100. A FDC pictures a heart and has a postmark displaying a knot of lovers, which is to remind us of the main qualities of love -- fidelity and devotion.



Fig. 17

9. On February 14, 2005, the Ministry issued a 9 Sk stamp commemorating the Family (Fig. 18). The stamp depicts the family group -- father and mother, breastfeeding their baby. Despite the numerous problems families face at the



Fig. 18

beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, this long established natural component of human society is still most typical. Just over ten years ago, the General Assembly of the UN declared 1994 as the International Year of the Family. This stamp with the "Family" motif is a continuation of the similarly-themed stamp issued by Slovak Post in 1994. Every year on 15 May -- International Family Day -- Slovak Post pays tribute to the family as the basic building block of society. From ancient times, various forms and emblems representing the family have had their place in a

myriad of multi-cultural art works. The interpretations of this motif may vary, but the elementary message -- the sense of co-existence, happiness, and harmony -- remains constant. The importance of the family stems from the principle of solidarity, which all of us possess in varying degrees. This is one of the reasons why the image of the family continues to inspire -- the simple relationship between mother, father, and child portrays the wide range of human qualities. The stamp was designed by Katarina Vavrová and produced by WSP - CARTOR of France using offset printing in sheets of 100. A FDC includes an enhanced drawing of a sculpture based on ethnic statues.



Fig. 19

10. On February 14, 2005, the Ministry issued a 16 Sk stamp commemorating the 750<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the town of Banská Bystrica (1255-2005)(Fig. 19). The history of Banská Bystrica is rich and colorful. As early as 1255, following a Tatar invasion when King Belo IV invited colonists to come and inhabit the territory, Banská Bystrica was declared a free town with extensive privileges. The contemporary inhabitants received valuable liberties -- the right to mine precious metals over the territory of the then Zvolen District, as well as the right to elect a mayor and parish priest. In 1380, Banská Bystrica joined other mining towns of the area to form a union. It remained the leader of this union until the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Ever greater wealth was brought to the town due to the mining, processing and export of copper after the establishment of the Thurza-Fugger Society. In 1620, a momentous event took place in Banská Bystrica -- Gabriel Bethlen was elected King of Hungary at the Hungarian Assembly in Banská Bystrica. The credit for the town's reputation also goes to Matej Bel, a polyhistor and one of the most respected scientists of his time. Among other famous persons who lived in Banská Bystrica are Ján Francisci, Ján L. Bella, Ján Botto, Jozef Murgaš, and Stefan Moyzes -- the first president of the Slovak cultural society Matica Slovenská. In 1944, the town became the central point for the National Uprising, and Free Slovak Broadcasting was stationed there. A tower of the Church of the Assumption of St. Mary (also called the German or Parish Church) is the main motif of the stamp issued on the occasion of the 750<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the town's privileges having been granted. The late Gothic alter made by Master Pavol of Levoča can be seen at this historic church. The stamp was designed by Jaroslav Uhel and produced by WSP - CARTOR of France using offset printing in sheets of 50 pieces. A FDC portrays Mathias's House (*Matejov dom*) that, according to legend, King Mathias Corvinus had built in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

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